

The
Doctrine
OF THE
CHURCH of ENGLAND
Relating
To the
BLESSED SACRAMENT
Of the
LORDS SUPPER,

Explained
And
Freed from some injurious Reflections
Cast upon it
By
a Lutheran Minister

In
Hamburgh. By *J^{no} Thomas* 88
Chaplain to the English Factory

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The Preface.

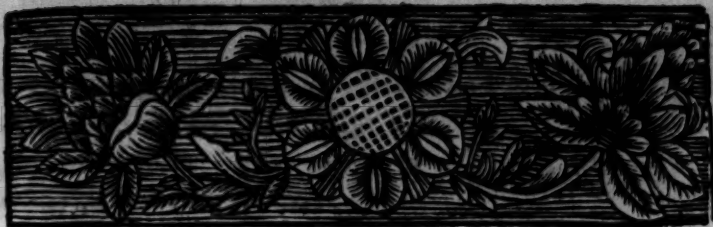
The Learned Author of the humble address to an Illustrious Prince of the Empire, which seems to be the best Book, that has been written in Hamburgh upon the present Controversie, has thought it a necessary Piece of Prudence to conceal his Name, tho he wrote among his own People with the multitude on his side. It is no wonder therefore, that a Foreigner imitates so modest an Example, and chooses rather to rely on the Force of his Reasons, than on the authority of his Name, where the latter woud only lay him open to a vast Majority that think against him. He woud be sure to have all the fond and superstitious Admirers of the famous Mr. N. . . which are a Body formidable in their Numbers, to be his professed Enemies: And yet he cannot forbear saying, that he does not look upon that Gentleman to be so considerable a writer as to com-

THE PREFACE.

mand an Answer, nor had he put pen to Paper, but only in Regard to the Reverend Consistory, who have set their seals in a very solemn Manner to all that he has said in his short Demonstrations.

The author does not engage in the present Dispute concerning an Union between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, which he believes will be concluded on the the same Day of the Month, when we and our Dissenters shall be united at Home. He only defends the Church of England in a single Point of Doctrine which a hasty writer without any Provocation has attacked in the Heat of his Skirmishes. For this Reason indeed we forgive him the Reflections he has made upon us, but think our selves obliged at the same Time to shew, that we do not deserve them.

You will observe in the Course of these Papers, that the writer does not pretend with Mr. N. to an Infallibility in his way of thinking: He only desires you to lay aside all Prejudices, and to give his Reasons a fair Examination.



THE DOCTRINE of the Church of England relating to the B. Sacrament.

It is a very great Unhappiness attending the Writers of Controversies, that either out of a natural weakness of Judgment, or out of a fond opinion of their own Parts, or which is most usual, for want of a good argument to support their Cause, they too frequently blow themselves up into a Passion, and then lay furiously about them at all adventures without Regard either to Friend or Foe. To which of these Causes the Reader pleases, or to all of them, if he thinks fit, he may ascribe the Late unwary Conduct of the Celebrated Mr. N., the most valiant among his Brethren, and for that Reason without Doubt chose out by them to be their Champion. In a Paragraph or two of his incomparable Discourse worthy the Approbation of a Learned Consistory, he has reflected upon the Doctrine of the Church of England relating to the B. Sacrament of the Lords Supper. His words are, Page 37, of his *Short Demonstrations*.

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*Heurmeister
Pastor
of St. Jacobi's*

They (the Calvinists, as he is pleased to call us,) explain the words of Institution, this is my Body, this is my Blood, in a figurative Manner : but if Christ had said, this signifies my Body, this signifies my Blood, then wou'd it never follow that it was his real Body, or his real Blood, as no one is so stupid, as to take the Emperor's Picture to be the Emperor himself. But as the Almighty, omnipresent, true and Faithfull Jesus saith, This is my Body, the Calvinists are guilty of an Antichristian Practise in contradicting him so impudently, and perverting his words. For they shut up his Body in Heaven, and teach publicly (directing to the Rubrick annexed to our Communion Office) that his Body is not upon Earth. What remains to them then in the Sacrament? and what Benefit can they receive from it &c.

The Doctrine, which he here condemns, is taught by all the Calvinists in General in much stronger Terms, than the Church of England makes use of; and therefore we can see no Reason why he shou'd point particularly to us; unless it be for Fear that the English, who come nearer to Luther than to Calvin, shou'd in Case of Necessity be his Freinds. Or, it may be, this is the Relicks of an old inveterate Hatred he has conceived against us, for what Cause we know not, but which he has formerly vented in great Abundance in a Preface he wrote to a Book entitled, *the Golden Apples* &c. which is translated by a Friend of his out of the English into the German Language. In this little Piece among many other Calumnies he very liberally bestows upon

upon us, he says expressly of all *English Books* in General, that *they spring from a Sect of People, who embrace fundamentally - destructive Errors in many Points.* And in remarking the Folly of some of the Lutheran Clergy, who think (as he says) that they cannot be compleat Divines unless they have travelled into England; the good man breaks out into this *pious and charitable* Expression of his Grief, *alass*, says he, *may we not sigh, and cry out in a certain sense; Is it because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baalsebub the God of Ekron?*

Mr. N. . . . must have heard that the *English* are a People that do not love much Ceremonie; or else he woud not have presum'd to make so free with us upon so *slender* an Acquaintance: Unless his Design in it be to shew the world, how capable he is of writing upon a subject, which he do's not understand. For evry One, that has the least Knowledge of our Constitution, must know, that our *Established Church*, unless this Gentleman has changed it, is far from being on the side of Calvin, and that for one Book published against Calvinism in *Hamburgh*, we have at least twenty come out against it in *London*. I will not say they are written with all that Bitterness, that this *good-natured Divine* has wrote with, but I am sure with a better method, and more Argument. For he has so peculiar a Talent at Reasoning, that I cannot forbear giving my Reader a Specimen of it, to let him see how he likes it:

This excellent Writer then is not content to shine in the common Way, but must strike out a *new Method* of Writing, I had almost said, only I remember to have seen a Treatise written in the same Form, from whence I suppose he borrowed the scheme of his *Short Demonstrations*. But I will still venture to call it a *Method unknown to the common Reason and Practise of the Learned*. For the old-fashion'd Way of Writing is first to weigh the subject you design to treat of, and then to handle it in a method, that naturally rises from it. But this Gentleman first pitches upon his method, and then resolves to make his Matter (tho never so tough) buckle to it, whether it will or not. I was in extream Pain for him the last Year, when he proposed in the Course of his Preaching to split evry Gospel (run as it wou'd) equally into four *Queries*, and the last of the four to be always a *Curious* one: For I considered with my self that many of these Gospels were very serious and solemn; and I could not imagine how it would be possible for him to make himself merry with evry One of them: But it must be confessed, that he has managed it with a great Deal of Dexterity, and said abundance of *Handsome* and *Witty* Things, that the *Evangelists* never thought of. Being a great Poet, perhaps he has learnt this Knack of Composing from filling up what the French call *Bouts Rimes*, where the jingles to the whole Poem are given beforehand, and then the Invention is put upon the Rack to accomodate them with Sense. I
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make no Doubt, he fancies this Method of writing to have a great Deal of Ingenuity in it, but it is really as preposterous, as if a man should buy a Saddle beforehand, and then rommage the Country for an Horse to fit it. For if he should not happen to light of a Beast proportioned to his Saddle, he need only to do, as Mr. N. '... docs by his writings, to stuff up the Vacuities with Straw instead of something better.

A Man that can be so affected in the Pulpit without Regard to the Sacredness of the Place, or the necessary Edification of his Hearers, will not, we may imagine, give himself less Airs in a Pamphlet, where his only aim is to display his Parts and his Fire. And certainly no Genius less daring than his own could ever dream of undertaking the difficult Task he sets himself in his *Short Demonstrations*. The general subject of his Discourse is to shew, *that the Lutherans can by no Means enter into a religious Union with the Calvinists*. The most natural method of handling this Point had been, to have proved that an Union of this nature is repugnant to several Fundamental Articles of Religion. But this had been so easy a Conquest over the Enemy, that he could have gained no Honour by it: and therefore agreeably to his way of writing he resolves first of all, *that the projected Union is inconsistent with every Particular Article of the Creed, with every one of the ten Commandments, with every single Petition of the Lords Prayer, and contrary even to the Final word Amen, to both the Sacraments, to the whole and each Individual*

Particle of Religion: And his second Resolution is, that the *Proofs* of these Propositions shall find themselves afterwards as well as they can. A more moderate Genius would in the Course of this method be brought every now and then to a stand. but this inimitable writer supplies in Heart what he may want in Head, and stops at Nothing. He makes all the Sail he can without minding any Rocks or Sands that may lie in his way, and bears down all before him by the Help of two Figures in Logick, of which he is a compleat master, the *Petitio Principii* and *Ignoratio Elenchi*: Both of them together qualifie a man to write readily and copiously upon any subject with equall Perspicuity and Strength.

A few Instances out of his *Short Demonstrations* will make this whole Matter extremely clear. But because I am willing to set his arguments in the best Light I am able, I will suppose him debating with himself upon some of the most important Passages in that Work, and cast his Thoughts into the Form of a Dialogue between *Erdm.* and *N.*... in the following Manner.

Erdm. Why is the projected Union between the Lutherans and the Calvinists repugnant to the fourth Petition of the Lords Prayer; *Give us this Day our daily Bread*?

N.... Because the Calvin-Teachers are not content to receive their daily Bread from God, but are over eager to get it themselves out of the Mouths of the Lutheran Clergy. P. 19.

Erdm. Very well: but how comes an Union
of

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of this Nature to be contrary to the Doxology?
for thine is the Kingdom, &c.

N. . . . *Beause the Calvinists wvill not suffer God
to reign over them, but they wvill reign over God.*
P. 21.

Erdm. Is it possible! But novv I fancy I shall
pose you; pray, why is the Union incompatible
with the final Word *Amen*?

N. . . . *Because the Calvinists wvill not beleive on
Jesus Christ, wvho is the Amen, the true and faithfull
Witness.* P. 22.

Erdm. Incomparably good! could you but
hit off the whole Catechism thus excellently!
But how do you make it to be inconsistent vvith
the first Commandment?

N. . . . *It is an Idolatrous Union.* P. 1. *for the
Calvinists (as I shew in another litle Treatise) do
not vvorship the true God; but the God of this World,
the old serpent, the Devil and Satan him they vvorship.*
Calv. argl. P. 4.

Erdm. I confes you startle me: Yet after
all I shou'd think that notwithstanding any
such Union we might be able to observe the
Command of *Keeping holy the Sabbath Day*,

N. . . . *No, it is impossible, for if the Union shoud
go forvvards, vve shall be obliged to stand like dumb
Dogs in the Pulpit, and not be sufferd to preach on a
Sunday against the Errors of the Calvinists, as is our
Duty; which will be a most abominable Profanation of
the Sabbath.* Short Dem. P. 2.

Erdm. Better and better still! But say what
you will I cannot for my Life imagine, that if it
shoud

should succeed, there would be any Thing of *Murder*, of *Theft*, or of *Adultery* in it.

N. . . . And yet it is as clear as the Sun that the Union is against all these Commandments : for it is a murdering of souls ; it is stealing our Bread from us ; it is committing a spiritual Adultery, which is worse than laying with our Neighbours Wife. P. 3. Erdm. &c. N. --- &c.

I am persuaded the Reader will scarce believe, that Mr. N. . . . argues so very *shrewdly*, till he turns to the Pages in his Book all along referred to ; where he will meet with many more of his Reasons not inferior in *Might* to the foregoing. As for my own Part, I shall be very little concerned at what he has or can say against the *English*, and leave him for the future to answer his own Arguments, as being indeed the only ones he seems capable of answering. The *Calvinists* have very little Reason to be surprized at his proving so many odd Things against them ; the only Wonder is, that he has charged no more Paradoxes upon them, for in *his* Way of *Demonstration* he might have gone on to shew that the *Calvinists* are so far from having the Form of *Christians*, that they have not the Form of *Men*. They have no Eyes, because they cannot see their own Folly : they have no Ears, because they are deaf to his arguments : they have no Feeling, because they are not sensible of their own Danger : and they have no Life, because they have no Feeling. And now, o ye Protestant Princes, what a motley inconsistent Union are ye projecting?

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An Union of the *Seeing* with the *Blind*, of the *Hearing* with the *Deaf*, of the *Sensible* with the *Insensible*, of the *Living* with the *Dead*. If this Gentleman goes on to take Pains in the vway he is in he may be able in a litle Time to prove that Day is Night; that our Posterity vvere born before us; and discover several other surprising Truths that have lain hid from the Foundation of the World. In Expectation vwhereof I remain his humble servant, and leave him a moment amidst his Demonstrations to come to something more *serious*.

The Church of England, a Branch of the holy Catholick Church of Christ, is a distinct Congregation of men agteeing in the same Form of Worship as prescribed by particular Canons, articles of Confession, Homilies, Liturgy &c. confirmed and established by the Lavvs of England. This Society of Persons are distinguished from all other Professors of Christianity by the peculiar Name of the *Church of England*. They are not called *the Reformed* in any other Sense, than in the General Import of that Word, as it includes *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* equally vvith our selves, as vve are all of us *reformed from* the Church of Rome. That vvich makes the general Difference betveen us, and all other *Protestant* Churches abroad, is the Form of our Ecclesiastical Government; for vve affirm Episcopacy to be of Apostolical Institution, that the Bishops are a distinct Ordet from the Priesthood, and that they alone have the Povver of Ordination to the Ministry, as succeeding in Room of the Apostles. Upon vvhat
Foun-

Foundations vve build these our Notions of Church Discipline is beside my present Purpose to enquire : I mention them only as articles of our Religion, to shew, that vve are not *Calvinists*. And therefore Mr. N. . . 's stepping out of his vway, to bring us into the *Odious* Character he has given of the *Calvinists*, and sending us along vvith them very *civilly* to the Devil, is a particular *Favour*, for vvich vve are the more obliged to him, because it is entirely *unmerited* on our Part. Is this the Requital vve have from him for the services vve have done his Party in the vigorous opposition vve make to the *Presbyterian* Tenet of *absolute Reprobation*? This is the Chief Doctrinne of the *Calvinists*, vvich principally distinguishes them from the *Lutherans*, and in the long and obstinate vvar, vvich these tvvo Evangelical Bodies have vvaged together upon this Head, vve have been Luther's faithfull Freinds and Allies, and brought in more than our Quota; and tho' vve have not both of us been able to make the opposite Party *surrender*, yet vve have obliged them in some sort to a *Retreat*: For it is evident that the present Calvinists have in a great measure softened the hard *Positions* of their Forefathers.

But Mr. N. . . has found out *accidentally* that in our Doctrinne of the Sacrament vve affirm the *natural* Body of Christ to be in Heaven and not upon Earth; and therefore vve must necessarily be Calvinists. *A very just Conclusion!* Because vve may agree vvith them in one Point, therefore it is necessary that vve agree vvith them in *all*, or, to
state

state the argument mathematically, because two Triangles have one side equal: therefore both the Triangles are equal! if Mr. N. . . . be able to *demonstrate* this too, the World will look upon him to be the *greatest Mathematician* of the Age.

But perhaps after all the very Foundation of his whole argument may be as precarious, as the Consequences he draws from it. And it may be at last that there is not that *vvide* Difference between the *Lutherans* and the *Church of England* in this very Point relating to the Sacrament, as he may suggest. Whether there be or not I will give every *Lutheran* Reader an Opportunity of judging, by proposing our Explication of this article together with the general Reasons, by which we support it: which is a *self Defence* only against Calumny, and not any *Attack* upon the Faith of others, who may think differently from our selves.

Our Belief then of Christs Presence in the holy Eucharist is laid down in general Terms in our *Church-Catechism*, where among other Questions are these following.

Q. *How many Parts are there in a Sacrament?*

A. Two: The outward visible Sign, and the inward Spiritual Grace.

Q. *What is the outward Part or Sign of the Lords Supper?*

A. Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

Q. *What is the inward Part or Thing signified?*

A. The Body and Blood of Christ, which
are

are verily and indeed taken by the Faithfull in the Lords Supper.

From hence it is evident, that vve asser the real Presence of Christ in the holy Sacrament, and therefore if there be any Difference betveen us, it must be concerning the *Manner* in vvhich vve conceive our Saviours Body to be there present. Our Doctrin herein is, that it is there present only in a spirituall and Heavenly Manner to be received by Faith, as is more fully expressed in the 28. Article of our Religion, vvhich says, *that the Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten in the Supper only after an Heavenly and Spiritual Manner, and that the Mean vvheryby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is Faith.* I need not say that we understand the *heavenly* and *spiritual* in opposition to the *Corporeal* Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, for Mr. N. . . has observed that already in the Passage, vvhich he refers to. *The vvhole Rubrick runs thus*

Whereas it is ordained in the Office for the Administration of the Lords Supper that the Communicants should receive the same kneeling (for in that posture vve alwayes receive it) vvhich Order is vvell meant for a Signification of the humble and gratefull acknowvledge-ment of the Benefits of Christ therein given to all vvorthy Receivers; and for the avoiding of such Profanation and Disorder in the Holy Communion, as might othervvise ensue; yet lest the same Kneeling should by any Persons, either out of Ignorance and Infirmitie, or out of malice and Obstinacy be misconstrued and depraved, it is here declared that thereby no Adoration is in-
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tended, or ought to be done, either unto the sacramental Bread or wine there bodily received, or unto any Corporeal Presence of Christ's natural Flesh and Blood. For the sacramental Bread and Wine remain still in their very natural Substances, and therefore may not be adored; for that were Idolatry to be abhorred of all faithful Christians, and the natural Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ are in Heaven, and not here, it being against the Truth of Christ's natural Body, to be at one Time in more Places than one.

Upon the whole, if by the *Real* be understood the *Corporeal* in Opposition to the *Spiritual* Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, it is evident, that the Church of England disclaims the *Real* Presence, But if no more be implied in it, than that Christ is not imaginarily, but really, and effectually present in the holy supper after a *Mystical, Spiritual, Heavenly* Manner to be received by Faith, this is the sense in which we believe the *Real* Presence. If any will still insist upon it, that our Faith comes not up to the full meaning of the words *real Presence*, we will very willingly give up the Term to them, provided they will allow us to be right in the Doctrine it self.

But whether we err in this Point of Faith, or not, must be tried by inquiring into the true Sense of the Words of Institution, *this is my Body*, whereon the Doctrine of the B. Sacrament is founded: that we understand them figuratively is not denied: but to say, that by departing from a literal Interpretation we deal *Antichristianly*, contradict our Saviour impudently, and pervert his Words,

is to make use of Calumny instead of argument: for it is abusing us upon supposition only, that our Saviour really gave his natural human Body to be eaten, which is taking for granted the very Point in Question. We believe our B. Lord to be Truth it self, that he can neither deceive, nor be deceived; and for that very Reason we do not believe that he intended all, he spake, in a literal sense, because many of his Expressions are true only in a figurative Interpretation. When the Jews demanded a Sign of him, to shew by what authority he drove the Merchants out of the Temple, *destroy this Temple*, says he, *and in three Days I will raise it up*, and yet his faithfull Interpreter the Evangelist says, that *he spake of the Temple of his Body*. He says expresly, that he is *the Door*, *the true vine* &c. which are Expressions that Mr. N. will explain figuratively, without any Hazard of dealing Antichristianly, contradicting our Saviour impudently, and perverting his words. The Reader will observe therefore, that our Dispute is not concerning the *Veracity* of our B. Saviours Words, but only concerning the *Interpretation* of them. And then the Point in Question will be this.

Whether the Words of Institution, whereon the Doctrine of the B. Sacrament is founded, are to be understood in a literal, or a Figurative Sense?

But before I proceed to examine this Point, I cannot help saying, that it seems very unaccountable, that the Lutherans should urge us with the necessity of a literal Interpretation: this is putting

ing a Piece of Artillery ready charged into our Hands, which we may very easily turn against themselves. For if the most obvious sense of so many Letters be taken without Regard to any absurdities, that may flow from it, we cannot see how the *Lutheran Doctrine* in this Particular can support it self: Since it seems to us undeniable, that the *Roman Catholics* have in this Article the most *literal* sense of the Words on their Side.

I am sensible indeed that many Learned *Lutheran Divines* have laboured to find out an uncommon Sense to suit the Words of Institution literally, which would never have been observed by an Ordinary Reader, and will never abide the Test of a Judicious One. They call the whole a complex demonstrative Proposition, and make it to signifie as much as, *this is Bread and my Body in, with, and under the Bread.* They explain this is my Body in the same Manner, as when a Person takes a Purse of Gold in his Hand, and shewing it says, *this is Gold*, without taking Notice of the Purse, that contains it; or as a Physician, reaching a Glass to his Patient, tells him, that *it is a choice Cordial* without mentioning the Glass; or as a Lover presenting his Mistress with a Diamond Ring, desires her to accept of *that Jewel* without observing, that he makes her a Present of the Ring too. These are familiar Instances, in which the *Lutheran Writers* love to explain themselves upon this Head. But who does not see, that this is a compendious Way of speaking, so little suited to the Dignity of a Sacrament, that

it is not allowable even in common Discourse; except where it is reasonable to suppose, that the Person, to whom you speak, is conscious to your having two Things in your Hand? For if both the Things are not perceivable, or if one of them at least be not naturally supposed to contain the other, the Expression would be absurd. In the first Instance of a Person holding up a Purse, and saying, *this is Gold*, the Phrase, tho' short, is yet intelligible; because the Purse is naturally supposed to contain something in it, which may as well be what he affirms, as any Thing else. But if the Gold were taken out of the Purse, and wrapt close in a Lump of Lead, and he should hold the whole up in his Hand, and say only, *this is Gold*, without adding, that it is wrapt in Lead, he would speak so very compendiously, as not to be understood: because the Demonstrative points only to one substance in View, and there is no necessity to suppose a Lump of Lead to be the Vehicle of any Thing else. For the same Reason this Form of Expression cannot be applicable to the Words of Institution; because there are neither two Substances perceivable, nor is the one naturally supposed to contain the other; there being no Manner of Relation between the Body of our Saviour, and the Bread, to make it reasonable in the Nature of the Thing to suppose the one to go along *with, in, or under* the other.

The plain, unforced, literal Meaning of the Words of Institution is, that what our B. Saviour gave to his Disciples was his real natural Body only;

only ; for he does not say *this Bread is my Body*, the Original will not admit of that Construction, and that would be to affirm that it was Bread and not Bread at the same Time: much less does he say, *this is Bread and my Body*: lest of all does he say *in with and under this Bread is my Body*, but he says absolutely, *this is my Body*, he makes Mention of no more substances than one; supposing him to have given them his Body only, the Expression could not have been more plain, than it is; and Consequently if we take the proper Signification of so many Syllables, the Disciples did receive nothing from him, but his Body; and if they received nothing from him, but his Body; there must of Necessity have been a Change of the Element. So that all the Arguments that are brought in Favour of a literal Explication of the Words of Institution, let them be drawn from what Topick soever, are so many Distinct Arguments in favour of Transubstantiation, and do really betray the Cause of Lutheranism, when they are unwarily brought in to defend it.

It is a Satisfaction to me to find, that what I have to offer against a literal Interpretation will not be levelled against the Lutherans in General, but only against some paticular Men among them, who have the Popish Cause at heart.

To the Point therefore.

We allow that all holy Scripture is to be interpreted in a *literal* and Historical sense; unless where there is evident Necessity from the whole scope of the Discourse running in a Metaphor,

or from parallel places of the sacred Writings, or from some other uncontested Principle of right Reason to interpret it *figuratively*. For otherwise illminded Men might explain away the Meaning of the clearest Passages of holy Writ by Figures and Allusions in defense of the most extravagant opinions.

We allow farther that the Inconceivableness of any Proposition in holy Scripture to our finite Apprehension is no argument, why it should not be interpreted in a *literal* Sense. For our being unable to conceive, how a Thing can be, is no Objection against the Reality of it. We cannot conceive how any Thing can be Infinite, and again we cannot conceive, but Something must be Infinite; Both sides are inconceivable, and yet they are such positive Contradictions, that one of them must necessarily be true, and consequently something must be true, which we cannot conceive. Things do not depend upon our Imagination for the Truth of their Existence, if they did, they would be, and not be at the same Time according to the different capacities of several Men as they could, or could not conceive them. In fact it is evident, that, if a Man will believe no more than he can comprehend, he must reduce all Science, as well as Faith, into a narrow Circle, and be no less a Sceptick in Philosophy, than Heretick in Religion. For he must deny that one Body is heavier, than another; because he can give no account of the Na-

Nature of Gravity ; and disbelieve the familiar Effects of the mariners Needle, because they are confessed to be inconceivable. If then we are obliged in common Life to believe many Things, the Natures of which we cannot comprehend, how much more reasonable is it to imagine, that the deep Things of God, and of a future Life cannot be fathomed with the Line of human Understanding.

But then at the same Time we must be allowed to make a plain, obvious, and necessary Distinction between those Things, which are *above the Reach of our Knowledge*, and those Things, which are *directly opposite to the Principles of Reason, which we do know*. What is beyond the Reach of our Apprehension we are no Judges of, and consequently must depend upon the Authority of those, that are; but we are so far Judges of what we find to be *opposite* to our Reason as to know that either that, or our Reason must necessarily be false. If a Naturalist will tell me, that by Observation of the best Glasses there are found to be many Millions of Animals in a Drop of Vinegar, and will argue from their having Life, that consequently they must have Lungs, Heart, and Liver, with all the several Vessels of Digestion, and for the separation of the Blood and animal Juices; I can only admire at the most exquisite Contrivance of these little Beings, which vastly exceeds my Comprehension : But cannot say, that there is any Thing in it opposite to any one

received Principle of Reason, or of Sense. But if he should go on to tell me, that every one of these Insects has an Heart as big as a Man's Heart: This would not (properly speaking) be to assert something above my Reason to comprehend, but it would be an Assertion directly opposite to the first Principles of Reason, and Sense: for if the first Principles of Reason, and sense be true, so many Bodies of that Dimension cannot be contained in so small a Space. To pass from human Authority, which is fallible, to the Divine, wherein we can be deceived only by a false Interpretation. When we read in the holy Scriptures, that God is Eternal, we are obliged to abide by the Letter, because tho' we cannot have any Adequate Idea of an Eternity, yet as far as we can conceive of it, there is nothing in it opposite to the common Maxims of Reason and sense, to make a figurative Interpretation necessary: But when we read, that God is vexed and grieved at the Heart, and the like; we cannot understand these Expressions literally, but only as spoken by way of accommodation to human Infirmities; because it is a Contradiction to the Principles of sound Reason, to attribute any Imperfection of Passion to the Deity. I instance in two Cases, wherein every one will agree with me, that the former of them, tho' it exceeds our Comprehension, is to be taken literally; and the latter to be explained by a Figure, because a literal sense is opposite to the Dictates of Right Reason. And from hence I infer this Proposition, which I lay down

down as the Fundamental, for resolving the Point
in Dispute. Viz.

That no Interpretation of any Passage of holy Scripture can be true, vvvhich contradicts the first Principles of Reason and sense.

This seems to me a self-evident Proposition, but to prevent the Ground's sinking under the Weight, I shall lay upon it, be pleased only to consider an absurdity or tvvo, vvvhich vvill follow from a contrary supposition.

If an Interpretation of any Passage of holy Writ be admitted, vvvhich contradicts the first Principles of Reason, and sense; it vvill lay a Necessity upon us of understanding every Other Passage of Scripture literally, hovv unreasonable soever it may be in it self. We shall be obliged to believe, that God is subject to the Violence of Passions, that he has Hands, and Eyes, and Feet; that our B. Saviour is a Vine, a Door, a Rock &c. For there is no Reason, vvhy vve should not understand these and the like places of Scripture literally, but only this; because a literal Explication of these passages vvould be opposite to the first Principles of Reason and Sense. But if such an Interpretation may be admitted in One Case, then barely to say, that it is opposite to Reason and Sense, is no Objection against a literal Interpretation in any other Case. We must therefore either interpret every Part of Scripture literally, as it runs, vvithout Regard to any absurdities, that may follow from it; or vve must lay down this to be the Rule of Interpretation; that vvhat can-

not be interpreted literally without a manifest Opposition to Reason and Sense, must be interpreted in a figurative Manner.

Again, If any Passage of Scripture may be truly explained in a Way directly opposite to Reason and Sense, then that single Passage will destroy the Authority of the Whole. The Gospel was originally attested by Miracles, which are an Appeal to the received Principles of Reason and Sense. *The Works that I do in my Fathers Name*, says our B. Saviour, *they bear witness of me*. But the miracles our Saviour performed could be no otherwise a Test of his Authority, than upon Supposition only, that the Principles of Reason, and Sense are true and infallible; Now if any Passage be rightly interpreted in contradiction to these Principles: One of these two Things must necessarily follow, either that that Passage is false in it self, or else that the Principles of Reason and Sense are not to be depended upon, choose which you will, and it destroys the authority of the whole; for if any Passage be false in it self, the Author cannot be divine and infallible, and if the Principles of Reason, and Sense are not to be depended upon, then the Miracles, by which the Whole is attested, can be no Proof of its Authority.

The general Question, whether the words of Institution are to be explained literally, or by a Figure, is now reduced to this particular One, whether the literal Sense contains a Mystery, that exceeds our Comprehension; or an Assertion di-

directly opposite to the first Principles of Reason and sense? If the former only, then there is no Necessity of departing from a *literal* Interpretation; but if the latter, then are we obliged to understand the Words *Figuratively*, unless in Defense of one Absurdity we will run our selves into many more, and explain every Other passage of Scripture literally, which cannot be done without renouncing the Evidence of Reason and Sense, and by that Means overthrowing the Authority of the Whole.

That it is impossible for a *Thing to be and not to be at the same Time*: That *the whole is greater than any Part of the same Thing*: that *One is not so many as twelve*: that *a Substance cannot be entire and divided at the same Instant*, that *one person cannot be two or more distinct persons*, and *the Like*, are first Principles of Reason and sense, and as true as the Scriptures themselves: I will venture to add, that they have a greater Evidence of their Truth, than the sacred Writings have: For tho' the Scriptures have all the Evidence any absent matter of Fact is capable of; and consequently must command the Assent of every Rational unprejudiced Man; yet it must be confessed at the same Time, that they have not that *Demonstrative irresistibile Evidence*, which these Propositions have: If they had; there would be no such Thing as an *Infidel*, or *Deist* in the World: Because there is no Man in the World, that understands the Terms of the Propositions, who is not convinced of the Truth of these *Universal Dictates* of Natural Reason and Sense.

It

It then any Passage of holy Scripture be interpreted in such a Manner, as that it cannot be true, unless these Propositions be supposed false; then it is evident, that that Passage does not contain a Mystery *superiour* to Reason and Sense; but it contains a *positive Contradiction* to both. If the Words of Institution in Particular be taken *literally*, the Result will be, that the foregoing Propositions must necessarily be false; and consequently a *literal Interpretation* will be *diametrically opposite* to the first principles of Reason and Sense: For he, who will believe *literally* that in the Institution of the B. Sacrament the Disciples did really receive, and eat the *very natural Flesh* and Blood of Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary, and is confessed to have the same Properties with our Bodies, and was at last hung upon the Cross, must in direct Consequence from hence believe the very *Reverse* to those *uncontested Principles* of Reason and Sense, viz.

That our B. Saviour took his whole Natural Body into his Hand:

That he gave himself away from himself into the Hands of his Disciples:

That he was eaten by them at the same Time; that he sat untouched before them:

That they drank his very Blood out of the Cup, as it was running in his Veins:

That each of his Disciples apart eat his whole Body, and yet there was but one whole Body among them all, and yet that one Body was still whole and uneaten &c.

Now

Now the Question is not whether our B. Saviour, as he is God as well as Man, cannot make these Things be: (This is arguing upon a wrong Basis; for we will give Mr. N. Leave to vent his *innocent* Spleen against our celebrated Bishop Pearson, P. 25. and to believe, if he pleases, that God can work Contradictions, tho' they be no Objects of Power, without any prejudice to our Argument.) But the Question is, whether Omnipotence can effect these Things without destroying the Evidence of Reason and Sense? whether if these Things can be true, our Reason and Sense must not be *fundamentally* false; and if they be *fundamentally* false, how can Miracles shew the Gospel to be the Word of God? Or how will any Man prove the Scriptures to be true by more *infallible* Evidence, than that by which we prove these propositions to be false. If we cannot be sure, that these Things are impossible, we cannot be sure that any Thing is impossible; it is possible then, that there may be no such Words in Scripture, as, *this is my Body*, and we can as soon believe that, as interpret them *literally*, because we can do neither without digging up the very foundations, upon which the Evidence of all Truth is founded?

The least that one would imagine is, that there is evident Necessity to be pleaded on the side of a *literal Interpretation* to ballance the many Inconsistencies, that flow from it: but to our great surprise we cannot find any, either in the Nature of the Thing, or in the Manner of the Expression.

If

If there were any Necessity in the Nature of the Thing, it must be either because Sacraments will not admit of Figures, or because the Benefits received from the Holy Eucharist cannot be conveyed to us, unless Christ be *corporeally* present there. But that Sacraments will admit of Figures is evident, because it is the very Nature of them to exhibit invisible Graces under visible Signs: And in the Institution of this Sacrament the Cup is confessedly by a Figure put for the Wine contained in it.

Mr. N. therefore lays the whole Stress upon the advantages to be received; which he imagines cannot be communicated to us without the *Corporeal* Presence of Christ; for upon observing that we teach publicly, that *Christs natural Body is in Heaven and not upon Earth*, he asks, *what remains to us then in the Sacrament? and what Benefit we can receive from it.* The same, we humbly hope, that the Lutherans believe, are communicated to them. When we are oppressed with our Sins, we hope to lay down the Burthen of them at this Mercy Seat, by sharing in the Merits, which we here commemorate. When our Faith is faint and Languid, we look upon these Tokens of the Covenant between God and us, to cherish and support it. Do our hopes begin to droop? we lay hold on these Pledges of Gods Love to Mankind, to animate them afresh. Is our Charity cold and contracted? we take a Coal from this Altar, to warm it into Life again. In short, If all the Graces be decayed, or thinly scattered in us, we hope by

by a *Spiritual* Communion with Christ in this holy Sacrament to get a new supply of them; to gain more Light in the Understanding, more Warmth in the affections, more Constancy under Trial, more Resolution in Virtue &c. And will any Man presume to say, that our Saviour cannot bestow the Blessings upon us without being *corporeally* present with us. Is he a God at Hand then, and not a God afar off? Cannot he, who put Virtue into the Waters of *Jordan* to cure *Naaman the Syrian* of his Leprosie, put a Virtue into the holy Elements to heal our *Spiritual* Infirmities? May not these Graces be conveyed to us by Baptism? Why then is it not equally necessary to believe Christ to be *corporeally* present there too? This were to prescribe to our Saviour in what Manner he shall convey his Grace to us; and *peevishly* to insinuate, that we will have the *real Flesh* of Christ, or that we will have *Nothing*.

Where then lies this mighty Necessity of a *literal Interpretation* in opposition to the first Principles of Reason and Sense? is it in the Words themselves? But that they are capable of a *Figurative Sense* is undeniable, because they may be as easily taken *Figuratively*, as when Joseph says to Pharaoh; *The seven Years of Corn are seven Years of Plenty*: or as St. Paul says of the Israelites; *they Drank of that Rock which followed them, and that Rock was Christ*: or as our Saviour says of himself, that *he is the true Vine*: In all these Instances the Figure is confessed to be Natural and easy, and consequently there

there can be no Difficulty in understanding the Words of Institution *figuratively*.

Our B. Saviour has expressed himself in the sixth Chapter of St. John with relation to eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood in much stronger Terms, than those, he makes Use of in the Institution of the Sacrament, and yet he explains his own Meaning in a Spiritual and figurative sense. His words are: v. 53. *verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you. Whoso eateth my Flesh and drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last Day. For my Flesh is Meat indeed, and my Blood is Drink indeed. &c.* But how are we to receive this Flesh and Blood, which is Meat indeed, and Drink indeed? Our Saviour himself tells us in a spiritual Manner, not with the Mouth, but by Faith. v. 35. *Jesus said unto them I am the Bread of Life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* Coming to him, and believing on him are made the same with eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood. And because he perceived the Disciples were offended at the hardness of the Expression, which they understood *literally*, he therefore adds in the Conclusion, which is the Key to the Whole. v. 36. *It is the Spirit, that quickneth, the Flesh profiteth Nothing, the Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are Life.*

I will add farther, that the Words of Institution may not only with Ease be interpreted in a *figurative* Sense, but that it is very natural and agreeable

agreeable to the Institution of the holy Eucharist to interpret them in such a Manner. As the B. Sacrament succeeded in Room of the Jewish *Pasfover*, there is a very great Analogy between them; and the Terms of the *Pascal supper* are frequently applied to the *Holy Communion*. Christ is called our *Pasfover*, *that was sacrificed for us*, and *the Lamb, that taketh away the Sins of the World*. It was at the very Time of Celebration of the *Pascha*, that our Saviour instituted the B. Sacrament. And what is more natural to imagine, than that in an Institution not unlike that, he was performing, he should allude to the common Forms of Expression, that were used upon that Occasion. On that annual Solemnity every Master of a Family, as he distributed of the Lamb to his Houshold, repeated these Words of Moses: *This is the Lords Pasfover*. But it is certain that the first Lamb only was the Pasfover, and all succeeding Ones were but *Memorials* of it, tho' they still bore the same Name. In like Manner our B. Saviour took bread, and brake it, and gave to his Disciples, saying, *this is my Body, which is broken for you*. But it is certain, that his Body was not yet broken, and therefore the Disciples could understand him no otherwise, than as, *this is the Lords Pasfover*, or a *Memorial*, as it was shortly to be, of the Lamb of God slain for us: Especially as our Saviour adds expressly, *Do this in Remembrance of me*.

In the second Part of this Institution our Saviour took the Cup, and gave it to his Disciples, saying, *this is my Blood of the new Testament, which is*

shed for many for the Remission of Sins, which are near the very Words of Moses, when he sprinkled the Book of the Law, and the People with the Blood of Calves and of Goats, saying, *This is the Blood of the Testament, which God hath enjoined unto you*: The Blood being the *Token* of the *Testament* or *Covenant*, which God made with them. These were Forms of Expression therefore, with which the Jews were well acquainted, and which the Disciples entertained without any surprise. They ask him no Question; which was so very natural to them upon all other Occasions, and which they would certainly have done in the present Case, had they been commanded to drink real Blood in Opposition to their Law.

My General Argument is this,

If there was all the Necessity imaginable to oblige us to a *literal Interpretation*, we could not comply with it: Because a *literal sense* is *contradictory* to all the Evidence, we have, of any Proposition's being true, and if we suppose it only, it will invalidate the authority of the *whole Scripture*. Much less can we embrace a *literal Explication*, when we see no Manner of Necessity, either in the Nature of the Thing, or in the Form of the Expression to oblige us to it. Least of all can we assent to it, when we find a *figurative sense* to be very Natural, and agreeable to the Style of the Holy Scriptures, to the Manner of our B. Saviour's expressing himself on the like Occasion, and to the Design and Institution of this very Sacrament.

It will be a little surprising to the Reader, if at last I should confirm this whole Argument with so great an *Authority*, as that of Mr. N. himself: And as far as he can have any Notion of his own Words, he asserts the very same Doctrine, which he opposes; for he says P. 45. *The Body of Christ is eaten in the Holy Supper, by all the Communicants with the mouth, and that not after a gross, and natural Manner, as Flesh is eaten out of the Dish, chewed, and consumed; where one Person cannot eat, what has been eaten by another: No, we must not entertain such gross, *Capernaïtical, carnal Thoughts of it. But it is done after a Supernatural, heavenly, spiritual Manner, so that we receive indeed the Real Natural Body of Christ, but invisibly, without chewing or consuming it; so that what one Person receives and eats, is received and eaten by another, and has been, is, and will be received by many Thousands of Thousands till the Day of Judgement.*

Here he advances the Doctrine of the Church of England in express Terms; setting aside only the unintelligible Part of his Discourse, wherein he talks of eating *natural Flesh spiritually* with the Mouth. That the Flesh of Christ is eaten *Spiritually* in the holy Sacrament is the great Point wherein we are all agreed. But that the Mouth is a *Spiritual Organ*, or that there is a *supernatural way* of eating *natural Flesh* without lessening or consuming it, are forms of Expression, which seem to us very harsh and improper, and no where to be met with in the Scriptures. Our Saviour says *take and eat this,*

C 2

this,

* N. B. he alludes to the Jews of Capernaum, St. John Ch. 6.

this, as positively, as he says, *this is my Body*, the whole is one entire Sentence, and there is no Reason to understand one Part of it *Spiritually*, and the other *naturally*: if he speaks of his Natural Body given into the Hands of his Disciples, he speaks of natural eating too: but if he speaks of a supernatural eating his Body; the whole is to be understood of a *Spiritual* Reception. And then Christ is no otherwise present in the holy Sacrament, than as he is there eaten, that is, *spiritually*, not *corporeally*, by a Communication of himself to our Minds *thru' Faith*, in such an *ineffable* Manner, as that the holy Elements are not only the *Sign*, but also the *Seal* of his Grace bestowed upon us.

In fine, we abide in General by the figurative Terms of Institution, *this is my Body*: hence we are said to receive the Lords Body, to eat his Flesh, and to drink his Blood, to partake of his most precious Body and Blood; and the like: The Lutherans pursue the same Figure in still stronger Terms, and partake of the Lords *real* and *natural* Flesh and Blood. Nay, several of our own Writers, as Archbishop Cranmer, Doctor Taylor, &c. have in pursuance of this Figure asserted the Doctrine of the real Presence in Terms as mysterious and obscure, as the Lutherans, and if Mr. N.^m had light upon any of these Authors, he had challenged us as Lutherans. But when Any of these Divines, *German* or *English*, come out of the Figure, and speak naturally, they tell us, that they mean only a *Spiritual* Reception, and that our Saviours Body is eaten in the Sacrament only after a *supernatural*,
spi-

spiritual, heavenly Manner. This is Demonstration therefore, that our Difference is merely *Nominal*, and not *real*; All of us meaning the same *Thing* under different *Expressions*.

I cannot conclude this little Piece without discovering so much of the *Lutheran* in my self, as to endeavour to vindicate the Character of Dr. *Luther* from the *unhandsome* Treatment he has lately met with from the *Clergy* of *Hamburg*. They are willing (it seems) to sacrifice the Honour of their great *Founder* in Defense of their *new Champion*: for they affirm (*Vor: Erckl. P. 17.*) that Mr. N's Reflections upon the Calvinists come not up to the Severity of those, which *Luther* himself has cast upon them, for, say they, *he has joy-ned the Sacramentarians, who deny the Real Presence of Christ in the holy supper, in Company with an hundred thousand Devils.* Who is there now so partially fond of *Luther*, as not to allow him to be oftentimes too warm and passionate in his *Expressions*? And is it not an hard Fate for him, to have those unguarded Periods of his Discourse particularly pointed to by those, who call themselves his Friends? As for my own Part, when I compare these *extravagant* Flights together with the other *eminent Qualities* of that great good Man, I look upon them to be the *Shades* only, that set off the Beauty of the Piece. The Cause of *Reformation*, he was engaged in, demanded an uncommon Fire, and Bravery; and his starting aside now and then out of the way, like a Generous War-horse, shews only the Excellency of his Breed, and the

Goodness of his Mettle. But the *Doctor* is not really so Angry as these learned Gentlemen would make him, and the passage, they refer to, receives but little advantage from their Citation: for the Paragraph runs thus. *

With the words of Institution thou mayst confirm thy weak Conscience, and say, altho' numberless Thousands of Devils in conjunction with the Sacramentarians should most impudently with one Voice affirm, how can Bread and wine be the Body and Blood of Christ? &c. Yet I am sure that all the Spirits and learned men put together are not so wise and understanding, as I know God to be in his minuteſt Finger. Now the Words of Christ are expreſly, Take, eat, this is my Body. Drink ye all of this for this is the New Testament in my Blood &c. To theſe Words we aſſent, to theſe we adhere conſtantly, and we would fain ſee, who they are, that dare to dictate to Chriſt, or teach, or do otherwiſe, than he has ſaid.

What is there now in this innocent Paſſage compared to Mr. N.'s Expreſſions, wherein he charges the Calviniſts with being worſhipers of the Devil, and with being Devils themſelves? What is there to be compared to all that Load of Calumny and Ill-Language, with which Mr. N. has dunged every Page of his Book, to make it productive of Strife and Confuſion. The only Objection we have againſt theſe Words of Luther is, that they

* *Hoc Verbo conſcientia tua imbecillitatem confirmare potes, ac dicere, etiamſi infinita Diabolorum myriades &c. Luth. Catech. Maj. De Sacram. Altaris.*

they want argument: For in the same way of Reasoning we may prove Christ to be a Door. *Tho' an hundred thousand Devils in Conjunction with any sett of Men should ask; how Christ can be a Door? yet we are sure that Devils and Men put together are not so wise &c. But Christs words are expressly, I am the Door. And we would fain see any who dare dictate &c.* In both Cases the Argument is built upon this supposition, that the Words of Christ are to be taken *literally*; which is begging the Question: For in the latter Case it is confessed that the words are to be taken *figuratively*, and that they are to be so understood in the former Case in the Institution of the Sacrament, is the Point I have been all along determining.

I cannot flatter my self, that my Reasons will appear in the same Light to every Reader, as they do to my self. For we can no more expect that all Man should think as we do, than we can expect them to have all the same stature or Complexion. For others therefore to be angry with us, because we cannot come into their Sentiments, is not in reality to be angry with us, but with the Being, that formed us, for not furnishing us with Capacities equall to their own. If indeed we were obstinate in our Opinions, and contumaciously persisted in them against evident Demonstration, the Blame would justly ly upon our selves. But I hope the foregoing Reasons will plead our Cause so far with you, as that you will pity and pardon our Error, if you still believe us to be guilty of one: At least I hope they will screen

us from the Rage of *Violent Men*, who pronounce us eternally damned in another Life ; Only because in *their Opinion* we may be *mistaken* in this. It is cruel in them to divert themselves with us in this Manner at our Everlasting Expence, and to play (like the Man in the *Proverbs*) with *Firebrands* and *Death* saying, *are vve not in Sport?* *Luther*, whom they would be thought so forward to imitate, sets them a quite different Lesson in his private Instructions to *Melancton* to compose Matters amicably with the *Zwinglians*, wherein he has these remarkable Words which I will leave with them to subscribe to at their leisure.

Christ is my Witness (says he) that I would buy off this Difference (about the Sacrament) not only with my Body and my Blood; but -- what shall I do? Perhaps they are induced out of a good Conscience to embrace the other Opinion. Therefore let us bear with them: if they are sincere, Christ the Lord will set them free. I on the Contrary, as far as I know my self, am led by my own good Conscience into my Opinion; and let them bear with me, if they cannot come over to my sentiments.

Ego hoc Dissidium (testis est mihi Christus meus) redemptum non uno Corpore et Sanguine meo, sed -- quid faciam? Ipsi forte Conscientiâ bonâ capti sunt in alteram sententiam; feramus igitur eos: si sinceri sunt, liberabit eos Christus Dominus. Ego contra captus sum bonâ meâ Conscientiâ (nisi mihi sum ignotus) in meam sententiam: ferant et me, si non possunt mihi accedere. Burn. Ref. V. 3.

F I N I S.

Errat. P. 31. l. 7. for the r. these.